

BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT



BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Table of Contents

Vision and Mission Statement 3
Fire Chief's Report 4 - 5
Medical Officer's Report 6
Compliance Officer's Report 7
Fire Inspector's Report 7
Mechanical Officer's Report. 8
Assistant Chief's Report 9 - 11
Calls for Service 12 - 13
Significant Calls 14
Thank You 15
Appendix - 2011 Incidents by Incident Type 16 - 19



*Balsam Drive, Holden
Bangor Daily News Photo by Kate Collins*

BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR VISION

It is the vision of the Brewer Fire Department to be known as a progressive and innovative fire department, providing the finest in fire, rescue and emergency medical services by utilizing the best personnel, training and equipment, creating a work environment that promotes the health and welfare of our members. We will create a commitment to excellence by exercising the values of professionalism, honesty, integrity and respect for our customers and each other.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Brewer Fire Department is to minimize the loss of life and property resulting from fire, medical and other emergencies through prevention, safety education, mitigation strategies, fire suppression and emergency medical services. We foster a commitment to excellence through professionalism, honesty and integrity. We are here to help, not to judge.



A Message from the Fire Chief

You hold in your hand our 2011 Annual Report. This is our 143rd year of serving the citizens of Brewer.

2011 brought another year of increased responses for our department. Much of what we now do centers around EMS (Emergency Medical Services) responses. In fact, as you can find in this report, a full 91% of our calls were EMS related. The term "Fire Department" is increasingly becoming a misnomer as we respond to so many different emergencies throughout the year. As an emergency services organization, the public's expectations as to what we do have increased as well. When a citizen dials 911, they expect a prompt response by highly trained professionals. We strive to provide the very best in care, compassion and professionalism.



Although last year saw a dramatic increase in call volume, emergency and non-emergency responses are just a small part of what we do here at the Fire Department. A few of the highlights from last year included:

Student Live-in Program: For the first time, we became part of the student live-in program. This program gives a student, who is attending Eastern Maine Community College for a 2 year Associate's Degree in Fire Technology, the opportunity to work and live along side full time firefighters in the station. This program has been around for years and has helped many students find a career in the fire service. Our student is Jordan Stewart and he is also a resident of Brewer. Jordan is in his first year of the 2 year program and will remain with us until he receives his degree.

Promotions: Two of our members were promoted last year. Firefighter Ralph Cammack, a 24 year veteran of the department, was promoted to the position of Lieutenant/Fire Inspector in August. Firefighter Jason Gross, a member of the part-time division for 4 years before he was promoted to full time in October.

Public Safety Youth Academy: For the second straight year, we held the Youth Academy here at the department. 23 middle school aged children attended the two week program in which they spent one week with us and the other week with the Police Department. Included among the activities they took part in were: smoke trailer training, high angle rescue training, CPR & First Aid, ladder and pumper operations and a host of outside tours of nearby facilities. The two week program culminates in a graduation/BBQ event attended by the students and their parents. It has become a great success and will continue to be an annual event.

BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Grants: The department continues to pursue government funds in the form of federal and state grants to upgrade our equipment whenever possible. Last year, we were able to secure approximately \$35,000 in funds to purchase the following items: two new power stretchers for both of the ambulances, new protective firefighting gloves for all employees and new high visibility EMS coats to provide safety for our members when working in the roadways around the City.

All in all, 2011 was another very good year for the department. Looking towards the future, the Brewer Fire Department will continue to protect and serve our citizens with pride and professionalism.



BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Medical Officer's Report

With year 2011 significant changes in the way we do business arrived, with a new and updated set of protocols. All EMS providers were required to attend update training. Again this year we had an increase in call volume, as noted elsewhere in this annual report.

EMS played a role in the Youth Academy again this year, with a tour and discussion of the ambulances and what we do. They also had a tour of Lifelight and a discussion of what other services they provide to the public.

We continue to provide continuing EMS education, required for individuals to renew their EMS license every 3 years. 2011 was a busy year renewing licenses, 3 of our 19 licensed personnel renewed this year.

Three of the six EMS regions of Maine are working very close together beginning in July of 2011. They merged their respective EMS offices into one, the name of the office that assists us with issues that may come up with Maine EMS is named Atlantic Partners EMS (APEMS). APEMS is also responsible for providing licensure classes such as Basic EMT, Intermediate EMT and Paramedic. They also provide many specialty classes like Advanced Cardiac Life Support, CPR, Pediatric training, Prehospital Trauma Life Support, Wilderness EMT and many other classes. This merge was driven by the need to be more efficient with shrinking budgets and concern about the future of the financial assistance given by the State of Maine.

We helped other city departments with some CPR and First Aid training also assisted with the upkeep on their automatic external defibrillators (AEDs).



BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Compliance Officer's Report

My job as compliance officer involves making sure the various BLS, OSHA and NFPA standards are being met. As of the end of the year the Brewer Fire Department is NIMS compliant, allowing us to apply for Federal grant money.

I am also the Brewer Fire Department representative on the PRCC response plan committee, an always changing job.

In October I took a work place safety and OSHA compliance course. This class helps me to know what OSHA would be looking for if they were to come in for an inspection. I also took over the duties of overseeing the narrow banding of our portable radios and pager system. The narrow banding has to be in place by midnight December 31st of 2012. We have been working at updating our equipment for a year. This requirement was a non-funded mandate by the Federal Government. We did find a company from Missouri that does make the modifications for our pagers.

Fire Inspector's Report

Since my promotion in September of 2011 to Lieutenant/Fire Inspector I have been working with the Health Officer and the Code Enforcement Officer conducting inspections of local businesses for varying city licenses. These licenses required may be a victualers license, liquor license, amusement license, daycare license, or a license to dispense flammable liquids. We try to conduct these inspections together to make the process more convenient and friendly to the businesses. I have also been working on projects with Code Enforcement such as the Bouncy House located in the old Pepsi building on Wilson Street and multiple businesses setting up shop in the old Nissan's building located on Abbott Street. I have also done life safety and fire inspections at other businesses.

I have been on multiple chimney, woodstove, pellet stove and fireplace inspections. These are a visual inspection looking for obvious deficiencies or hazards. We also check to see that proper clearances are maintained from combustible materials and that any new installations are completed according to manufacturer's specifications. Solid-fuel burning appliances and chimneys should be inspected at least once a year more if used for main source of heat.

BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Mechanical Officer's Report

301 is a 2002 Pierce pumper. We sent it to Reliance Equipment in Vassalboro for annual pump test. Due to several internal problems in the pump it failed. We had them repair it in order to be able to certify pump as a 2000 gallon per minute pumper. We replaced two tires and routine service was done at the public works dept.

302 is a 1991 Pierce pumper. We also sent it to Reliance Equipment for a pump test. Unfortunately, it failed the test. A complete overhaul of pump was needed to keep it in service. Although an overhaul of the pump was very expensive it was more cost effective to repair the pump than to replace the truck. Routine service was done at the public works dept.

303 is a 2008 Pierce mini-pumper. This was also taken to Reliance Equipment for a pump test and it passed. We have had no issues with this truck, only routine service.

305 is a 2000 Pierce Quint, which means It has a pump and a ladder. It failed its pump test. Reliance Equipment found a piece of cast iron stuck in the impeller of pump. They disassembled and did some repairs in order for pump to pass.

The ladders were tested from an outside agency called American Test Center. They send an inspector to us. There were no major issues with the aerial on the truck or with any of the ladders in the dept.

307 is a 2004 GMC pickup. We primarily use to plow and haul equipment to and from a scene. No mechanical issues.

310 is a 2008 Chevy Impala. This is used as a staff car. Tires and routine service was all that was needed.

All portable equipment such as jaws, air bags, chainsaws, smoke ejectors, etc. were all in good working condition. We usually service and repair most of the small portable pieces of equipment here in the firehouse. We did take one chainsaw out of service and replaced with a new Stihl. We also purchased two floating strainers. This may help, when we are drafting water from a pond or stream, from picking up debris from the bottom which can cause harm to the internal parts of the pump.

BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Public Education Officer's Report

The fire safety program in the Brewer school system has now been in place for 30+ years. Fire department records show that classes were being taught in the Brewer schools as far back as 1974. Both fire and school officials realized the need for the program and made the commitment, which still stands today.

We believe that protecting our children from the dangers of fire is not a one-time effort. It is an ongoing effort requiring reinforcement from home, school, and the fire department. The Public Education Officer visits each classroom, K-6, twice a year to focus on key fire safety behaviors. By the time the students leave grade 6, they will have learned 17 key fire safety behaviors representing 15 hours of classroom time. Those fire safety behaviors are broken down into two categories:

· Reaction – What to do when a fire occurs

1. Recognize the firefighter as a friend
2. Stop – drop – roll
3. Crawl low under smoke
4. Have a Home escape plan
5. Identify exit plans and two ways out
6. Respond correctly during evacuation drills at school
7. Report fire and smoke immediately
8. First aid for burns

· Prevention – Stop the fire from happening

1. Correct use of matches and lighters
2. Understanding the Fire Triangle – What a fire needs to burn
3. Kitchen safety
4. Flammable liquid safety
5. Electrical safety
6. Safety with heating devices
7. Home fire hazard inspections

BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

8. Importance of smoke detectors
9. Dangers of false alarms

The fire safety behaviors are taken from a national program entitled, Learn Not To Burn. This program was developed by the National Fire Protection Association in 1979 and has been used successfully in over 50,000 classrooms worldwide.

The Public Education Officer has been fielding more and more requests from preschools / daycare centers throughout the area. Some of these entities want a formal type class for their children, while others simply want to tour the fire station or see the fire trucks. We are more than happy to oblige.

The Public Education Office also provides the following services:

- Workplace Fire Safety
- Fire Extinguisher Training
- CPR Certification
- First Aid Training
- Juvenile Firesetter Intervention



BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Training Officer's Report

The training program continues forward here at the fire department, despite the lack of a bona-fide training facility. We continue to be dependent on buildings being donated to us throughout the year in order to get valuable, hands-on training. We were invited to participate with the Orrington Fire Department in a live fire exercise this year. This was a building donated to them on Brewer Lake. This was the only donated building we had access to all year.

The full-time firefighters continue to train approximately 6 hours a month, for a minimum of 10 months of the year. This was arranged during their last labor negotiation and has worked out well. Running two ambulances and just shy of 3500 calls a year, it is difficult to get any valuable training done while on duty. Inevitably, the on duty training gets interrupted by an incident or incidents. Allowing the firefighters to train while off duty, when they are not responsible for the incidents of the day, produces better results.

Our call department personnel, or part-time firefighters, have been reduced to just four people for various reasons. Most notably would be the amount of training required of them and the lack of real world incidents in which to put that training to use. These men and women sign up to be on-call or part-time firefighters, only to learn that we call them in frequently for ambulance coverage and rarely for fires. This is not why they signed up, as it takes a certain type person to work in an ambulance.

Given the low number of part-time firefighters, we have done more training with the Orrington Fire Department on Wednesday nights. It is difficult to run a training session with just the four part-time firefighters, so combining allows us a greater number to work with and produces a better training session. It also produces a better result when the real fire happens, as we are all well acquainted with and work well with each other through this training.

Below is a list of topics that we trained on during the year:

- Ice & water rescue
- High angle rescue – Winter and Summer operations
- Search and Rescue – numerous times
- Jaws of Life – numerous times
- Ladders and fire pumps
- Live fire training
- Hazardous Materials
- Foam operations

We will continue to do our best with the training program, given what we have to work with. Hopefully, the future holds a modern training facility for us.

BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

The Fire Department responded to 3596 calls for service in 2011. This is a 3.7% increase over the previous year.

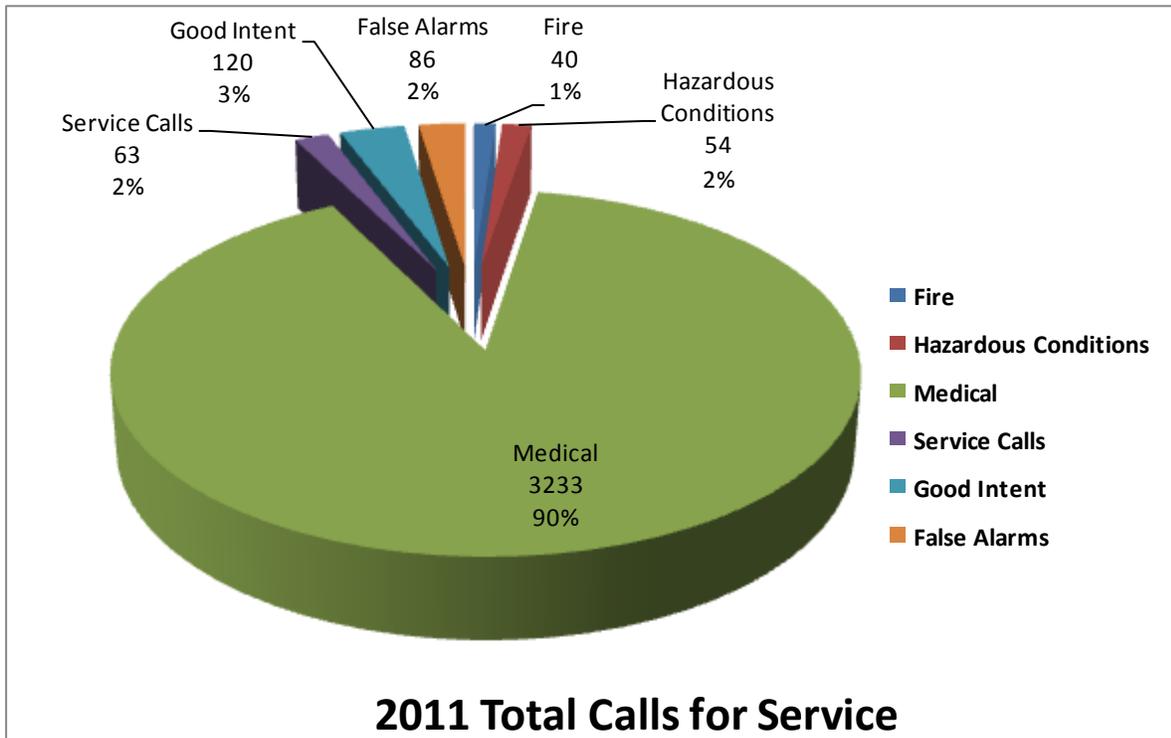
As you can see, our calls for service are broken-down into six categories. Those six categories are broken down into more specific types of calls. Attached is our annual "Incident type with detail" report so that you may see for yourselves how the categories are subdivided.

The **Emergency Medical** category speaks for itself, being the leading category the last several years. The types of things people call the ambulance for are too numerous to list, running the gamut from life-threatening to band-aid calls.

Fire or fire related calls were exactly the same this year with 40 calls in this category. They ranged from: building fires, building fires in other communities, cooking fires confined to the stove, furnace malfunctions, woods-brush-grass fires and vehicle fires.

Hazardous conditions are any of the following: Gasoline or flammable liquid spills, natural gas or propane leaks, oil spills, carbon monoxide alarms, electrical wiring problems, burned out light ballasts, power lines down and short circuited wiring.

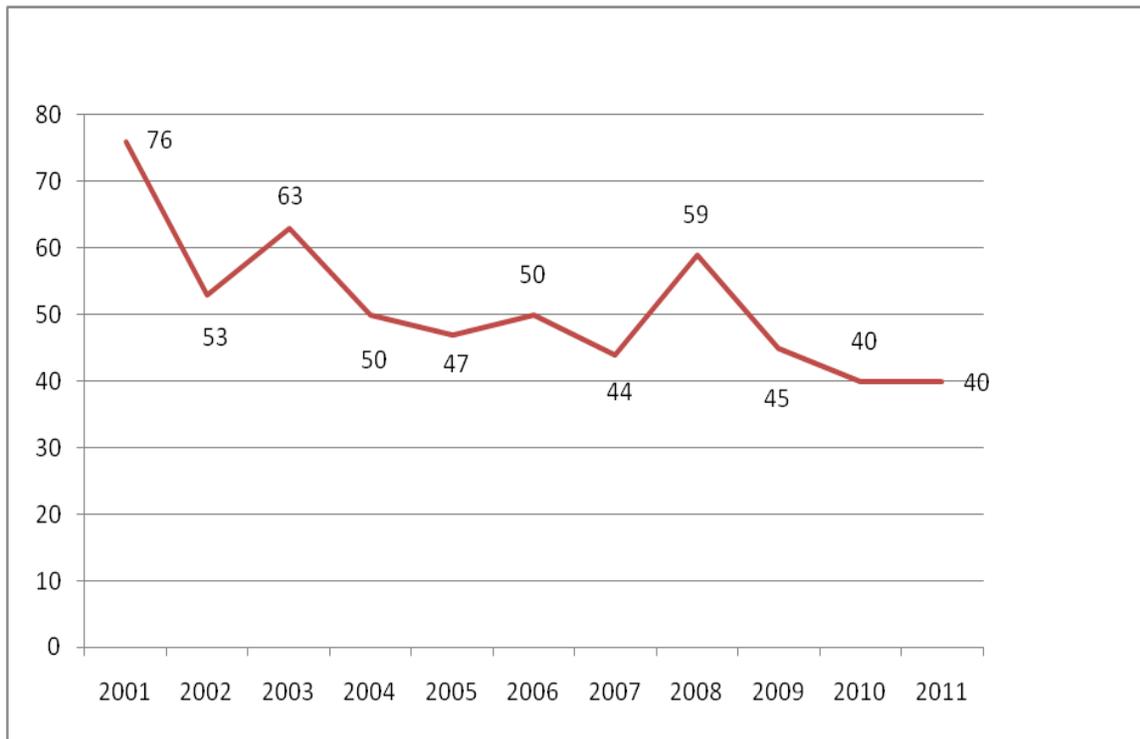
Service calls run a wide gamut also. They can be anything from people locked out of their homes to covering another community's fire station for them. Some other examples are: flooded basements, water leaks, smoke or odor smells, assist the police or water department, defective elevators, and even cats in trees!



BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Calls labeled as **good intentions** are usually someone mistaking steam from a dryer vent as smoke, or a legally permitted burn as an out of control brush fire. Motor vehicle accidents to which we are initially sent and then cancelled because there are no injuries also fall under this category.

Lastly, we have the **false alarm** category. These can be malicious false alarms, in which the fire alarm is pulled and the person then disappears. This category also covers faulty smoke detectors, sprinkler systems, heat detectors, etc. This type of call usually occurs during high-humidity situations, usually July and August. Smoke detectors and to some extent, heat detectors, are sensitive to hot and humid weather conditions.



Fire Calls
10 Year Chart

Significant Calls

Passers-by rescue man, dog from fire

Jan. 04, 2011

HOLDEN, Maine — A couple of curious passers-by saw thick, black smoke billowing above Wiswell Road on Tuesday morning and decided to investigate.

Two women die, five people injured in minivan crash in Eddington

Sept. 01, 2011

EDDINGTON, Maine — A crash that involved two minivans Thursday afternoon left two women dead and sent five other people to the hospital, including a father and his three sons.

Kitchen fire damages one-story house in Brewer

May 22, 2011

BREWER, Maine — A fire that appears to have begun in the kitchen left a one-story home on Park Avenue West with significant damage Sunday afternoon.

Investigators say Orrington fire appears suspicious

April 21, 2011

ORRINGTON, Maine — Investigators with the State Fire Marshal's Office and local fire officials spent Thursday morning going through debris at the site of a suspicious fire on Center Drive that started late Wednesday and burned into Thursday morning.

Propane leak in Brewer closes I-395 bridge

Jan. 29, 2011

BREWER, Maine — Traffic into Brewer on the Interstate 395 bridge and along North Main Street was being diverted Saturday evening due to a propane leak at the East-West Industrial park, a dispatcher for Penobscot Regional Communications Center said.

Eddington Fire Crews Work Overnight to Save Home

September 28th 2011

Fire fighters battled a house fire in Eddington Tuesday night. The call came out from the Route 9 home a little after 9 p.m.

BREWER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Thank You

The members of the Brewer Fire Department would like to thank the City Manager, City Council and the Citizens of Brewer for their support. We have a beautiful facility in which to work and some of the best equipment money can buy. Without all of your support, this would not be possible.

Inquiries regarding the Brewer Fire Department and services provided can be addressed to:

Chief Gary Parent
151 Parkway South
Brewer, ME 04412
207-989-3000
gparent@brewerme.org



*35 Park Avenue West
Photo Courtesy of Larry Doughty*